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INTER-DIVISIONAL CONFLICT
WITHIN A COMPLEX SECONDARY SCHOOL ORGANIZATION
A CASE STUDY

by



Robert Jack Mitchell

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled INTER-DIVISIONAL CONFLICT WITHIN A COMPLEX SECONDARY SCHOOL ORGANIZATION: A CASE STUDY, submitted by Robert Jack Mitchell in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to determine whether inter-divisional conflict existed within a large complex school. Three variables, perceived status, direction of initiation of action, and shared values were chosen to facilitate the investigation. The variables were placed on a conflict matrix which indicated the results expected when the variables interacted. Inter-divisional conflict was expected in three of the four cells of interaction. Only when a high status group initiated action on a low status group, when there were many shared values, was conflict not presumed.

Structured interviews with past and present administrative and teaching personnel and a study of the school's yearbooks and newspapers established the following:

1. A status hierarchy was perceived and accepted by a majority of the teachers interviewed.
2. Initiation of actions by other than the administrative staff was minimal.
3. The three major divisions of the school, academic, commercial, and technical, shared many educational values.
4. Inter-divisional conflict did not exist because there was general agreement among groups regarding the three variables.

An analysis of the history and development of the school was presented, which provided an insight into some of the possible reasons for the apparent lack of inter-divisional conflict. Additional reasons advanced by past and present staff members who were interviewed were then reported. The reasons most frequently mentioned were (a) the

policies of the past administrators, (b) the size of the school, (c) the organizational structure, and (d) the professionalism shown by the staff.

Evidence produced by this study suggests that under certain conditions, schools do not necessarily follow the patterns set by industrial organizations. This would indicate that more studies are required relating to conflict within an educational setting.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

The size and complexity of school systems have undergone an unprecedented increase in the past two decades. Abreast with these developments has been a change in thought regarding the role of education, particularly at the secondary or senior high school level. Goslin (1965, i) and Grambs (1965, pp. 10-11), writing about the American situation, have enumerated several causes for both the expansion and changes: (1) advances in technology, (2) an ever increasing school population, (3) the explosion of knowledge, and (4) pressures exerted by an increasingly informed public.

Changing social values and norms have resulted in growing pressures upon the schools to play the central role in assisting young people to adapt to a shifting society. Graves (1932, pp. 3-4) and Goslin (1965, i) note that this has resulted in the schools having to assume greater responsibility for the total development of the child. Consequently, educational thought begins to center around the concept of individual differences among children. When this is projected into secondary education, the need for more diversified educational facilities arises. Changes in secondary schools have resulted in part from the demands for equal educational opportunities, for better trained artisans, and for a higher degree of educational training. The traditional academic school has been joined by other educational institutions bearing such names as vocational, comprehensive, technical and composite schools. These relative newcomers to education offer, to varying

degrees, academic and non-academic subjects; different educational structures; a new type of teacher; and new educational objectives.

The diversification of educational facilities and the specialization of school programmes into academic, commercial, and technical divisions could result in a deterioration of interpersonal relations. This deterioration could conceivably result in conflict between the divisions of the school organization.

I. THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this research was to determine whether inter-divisional conflict existed between divisions within a large complex school.

Specific Statement of the Problem

Does conflict arise in a complex school due to perceived status positions of specialist groups?

Departmentalization by specialist areas of academic, commercial, and technical education may result in barriers or breaks in the interaction among these groups which could result in conflict. Therefore, this study was concerned with investigating the presence of conflict and the degree to which conflict was present: (1) when action was initiated from a perceived high status group to a perceived low status group (a) where there were many shared values, and (b) where there were few shared values; (2) when action was initiated from a perceived low status group to a perceived high status group (a) where there were many shared values, and (b) where there were few shared values.

When it became apparent that inter-divisional conflict as measured by the responses to the interview schedule (Appendix B) was negligible, the study then concentrated on discovering why the conflict did not exist and what measures had been taken to forestall anticipated conflict.

Statement of the Sub-Problems

The school studied was characterized by its organization into specialized areas of learning. Each area was subdivided into departments according to subject content. Therefore, in order to develop the problem, the following questions had to be resolved:

I. Do values influence intergroup relations?

- A. What are the overall values held by the staff?
- B. What are the values held by each specialist group?
- C. To what extent are the values shared by all of the specialist groups?

II. Is there a degree of association between status position and the initiation of action?

- A. Is there a perceived status ranking among the specialist groups and if so, what is the ranking?
- B. Who or what factors determine the status?
- C. Who initiates action?

Background of the Study

Current trends in education indicate that school populations are constantly growing and that today's students are remaining in school for longer periods of time (Grambs, 1965, pp. 10-11). To cope with this situation, and to provide educational facilities for those students not

desirous of continuing their formal education upon graduation from high school, technical and commercial programmes have been developed. Many secondary schools now offer these courses in addition to their regular academic programme. Thus, the situation arises where one school administrative body must co-ordinate and administer three or more distinct programmes within one school building. Further complications arise because of individualized timetables which allow students to choose courses from all areas. The uniqueness of these institutions may have brought about problems which hitherto have not been prevalent.

In order to offer the variety of courses and to handle the increased enrollment, schools have had to increase in size. Griffiths (1964, p. 114) and Seiler (1961, p. 561) indicate in their writings that as organizations increase in size, so does their propensity for task specialization. Specialization leads to the division of the organization into groups which develop their own identity with its concomitant values and behaviors. "It is a matter of common observation and of research evidence that these groups in organizations tend to develop some persisting patterns of behavior in their relations with each other (Seiler, 1961, p. 534)." It is from the relationship among groups that conflict arises, particularly when each perceives a different group status hierarchy. Claggett Smith (1966, p. 505) supports this contention by stating that intergroup conflict in organizations has been attributed to differences in basic interests and goals, and a lack of shared perceptions and attitudes among members at different echelons.

Value of the Study

Lawrence (1961, p. 570), Seiler (1961, p. 534), and Smith (1966,

p. 505) indicate that little systematic research has been accomplished at the microscopic level of interacting small groups within such institutions as business and education. They also contend that the studies to date have been rudimentary in form and that almost no experimentation has been designed to ascertain some of the conditions for intergroup conflict or its reduction.

Although this study was carried out as a case study of one school, it is hoped that the findings will contribute to a better understanding of inter-divisional conflict in the following ways:

1. Identifying possible causative factors within an organization which could lead to conflict.
2. Providing administrators of other complex schools with information which might serve as guidelines for overcoming or using conflict.
3. Leading others to carry out more sophisticated inspection of interaction among small groups within an educational setting.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Conflict. The definition of this term is based primarily on Litterer's concept of conflict (1966, p. 180). Conflict is the behavior which occurs when two or more groups are in opposition as a result of a perceived relative deprivation from the activities of or interacting with another group.

Relative deprivation. For this study, relative deprivation describes the feeling of dissatisfaction which arises when a high status group must participate in actions initiated by a lower status

group. The high status group's frame of reference is as Merton (1957) suggests, "a comparison is assumed with those who are in some pertinent respect of different status . . . (p. 231)." Thus, they feel deprived of their status position in the hierarchial structure, relative to similar groups in other educational institutions.

Complex School. For the purpose of this study, the complex school is characterized by the existence within a single school of full academic, technical, and commercial programmes. The responsibility for controlling and co-ordinating the operation of all programmes within the school is given to the principal.

The definitions for commercial programmes and for technical programmes have been adapted from the Edmonton Public School Board's pamphlet entitled Educational Opportunities and from the Student's Handbook published by the Balfour Technical School, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Commercial programmes. These are the programmes designed for students who intend to do one of the following:

1. complete their education in some field of business education or commerce at universities or colleges.
2. seek employment within the office, clerical, and financial organizations of business, industry, and public service.
3. develop a high degree of occupational competence in a specific group of office careers.

Technical programmes. These are the programmes designed for students who intend to do one of the following:

1. complete their education at universities, institutes or colleges, particularly at the professional level in engineering and science.

2. complete their education at Institutes of Technology in various fields of technology, engineering, or mechanical science.

3. complete their education through an approved apprenticeship programme in production, distribution and service occupations.

Initiation of action. This refers to two possible situations:

1. where one group is assigned or assumes the responsibility of telling (initiating upon) other groups what must be done, when, and the procedures for carrying the task to its completion.

2. where one group organizes either social activities or work situations in which the other groups are expected to participate.

Status. Emile Benoit (1966) states that "status has been defined as relative position within a hierarchy (p. 79)." Perceived status therefore will be used in this research as meaning those relative positions that groups believe that they and others hold within a hierarchy.

Specialist groups. The term specialist groups, as used in this study, refers to the groupings of subjects into areas of academic, commercial, and technical education within the school.

Values. The established ideals of the groups are referred to as values. These may include a regard for the individuality of each student, the type and scope of experiences to be offered during the learning process, and the roles the school must play. Values then are what each teacher or group perceives as being important for developing the potentialities of each individual student. For this study then "a value is an unlimited idea of what is desirable . . . (Zaleznik, 1958, p. 44)."

III. LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

Limitations

This study was essentially exploratory due to the lack of systematic research at the microscopic level of interacting small groups, particularly within educational institutions. Thus, one limitation became apparent, there was almost a complete absence of experimental designs suitable or adaptable for ascertaining either the degree of intra-organizational conflict or the conditions for its reduction or use. The information available was, as Seiler (1961) notes, "in a rudimentary form, both in the development of theory and in empirical research (p. 534)."

The type of study itself imposed further limitations. Because the problem was approached as a case-study, the population was severely restricted. Thus, the sample was small and was concentrated in one urban secondary school in western Canada where only inter-divisional conflict was researched.

Adherence to the rationale using three variables, group values, perceived status position of departments, and direction of action initiation, provided both the direction and a limitation to the scope of this study.

Delimitations

To reduce the study to a manageable task, many aspects of group interaction within the school were excluded. Interaction between sub-groups which were divided according to sex, level of grade taught, age, academic or vocational qualifications, or years of teaching experience were not studied.

No attempt was made to distinguish or categorize the types and degrees of conflict which were reported because they were intrapersonal in nature and generally occurred within a subgroup.

Conflict related directly to official and latent individual role perception was precluded. This type of conflict arises when the teacher's estimate of his expected behavior is in opposition to the administration's expectations. Further conflict occurs when the social role of the teacher, which may emerge as a result of some social characteristic (latent role), is incompatible with the role he is asked to assume (official role) as a member of a school staff (Lonsdale, 1964, pp. 151-153).

The effect of the conflict in terms of being functional or dysfunctional in nature was also precluded.

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CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I. SEILER'S THEORY

John A. Seiler's article "A Systematic Way of Thinking About Intergroup Behavior" (1961, pp. 534-546) provided the theoretical framework upon which this study was based.

In his writing, Seiler indicated that complex organizations comprise more than one small group. Each group has its own persisting patterns of behavior in its relations with other groups. The patterns of behavior are often based on interests cultivated by the group. This can be shown by examining existing traditions within the school setting, particularly in the supposed hierarchical structure imposed upon teachers and students. Thus, intergroup relationships and interactions could be responsible for conflict within the overall organization.

Katz (1964, pp. 105-114) supported Seiler's contention by outlining specific causes of conflict which he called conflict of interests. His explanation views conflict as stemming essentially from differences of interests between persons or groups occupying different positions in the organizational hierarchy. Katz also emphasized that the conflict arose because the subgroups were in functional competition with one another, were pursuing diverse goals, and struggling for limited organizational rewards. Using these influences as a starting point, Seiler (1961, pp. 534-546) was able to show that by imposing limitations on them and choosing such variables as values, status, and initiation of action, a case study of conflict could be carried out. Using the

variables chosen, he was able to construct a matrix which indicated the degree to which values between interacting groups were shared and the degree of consistency between status positions and the directions of the initiation.

When constructing his matrix, Seiler made extensive use of the information regarding values and status found in Homans' (1950, 1961) writings. Values were designated as those aspirations and things that assisted men to better themselves and provided them with rewards (Homans, 1961, pp. 45-47). After establishing his working definition of values, Seiler proceeded to measure and classify the values of the various groups in his study.

Determination of the values was accomplished by studying the past histories of the persons concerned, for "the past offers in principle the information we need to assess values . . . (Homans, 1961, p. 45)." Included in the study was the cultural past and the previous work experiences of the individuals comprising the groups, and those of the groups themselves. Thus, Seiler was in a position to determine those ideas, beliefs and feelings which each person brought to the group and also to determine the beliefs and feelings emanating from each group.

In fact, members of formal units are commonly chosen for their positions because they have skills in common with others in the unit, skills which differentiate them from the members of any other unit (Seiler, 1961, p. 541).

Further investigation into the phenomenon of small group structure indicated that those persons who had chosen particular vocations usually came from comparable social backgrounds. Their vocational training was almost alike both in theory and in practice, therefore,

socially and educationally, their values to some extent, were alike. Thus, when individuals with common values are placed into a group, their overall values become similar, and different from those shared by other subgroups (Homans, 1961, p. 47).

Seiler did not carry the measurement of values any farther than has been indicated in the preceding paragraphs. Although he did not fully explain his reasons for stopping where he did, it seems reasonable to assume that he agreed with Homans (1961) who stated that "our knowledge of values will always be imperfect . . . (p. 47)." The reason given for this statement was that the methods used for measuring values are crude and unsophisticated (p. 47). Therefore, further measurements would probably not have resulted in an increase in the accuracy of the findings.

Status and values, in groups, were found to be closely related. Turner (1961) found that the degree to which an individual lives up to or represents the values that are most important to others in the culture is "important in determining his 'external status' in their eyes (p. 215)." Seiler (1961) indicated that this also applied in the group situation where "the people and groups within the organization will tend to be ranked internally . . . (p. 536)." He further stipulated that the group members' perception of status depended upon the values they shared as a result of their backgrounds and previous work experience. Consequently, a work group is ranked according to other groups' perceptions and according to its own shared values.

The findings indicated that when business or industrial groups shared significant values and the initiation of action originated with the high status group and moved to the low status group, there was

"open, free collaboration between the groups (Seiler, 1961, p. 542)."

However, if there were few shared values, conflict arose. Action initiated by the low status group to the high status group caused conflict when there were "many" and "few" shared values. The major difference in the latter case, was in the resolution of the conflict. If there were many shared values, the conflict tended to be resolved informally and quickly, whereas conflict occurring because of few shared values, brought about a complete withdrawal from each other.

II. MODIFIED MATRIX

Seiler's research procedures were modified by this writer in order to adapt them to an educational setting. This was accomplished by inserting the word "perceived" before any indication of a status position (see Figure 1). The second modification was the use of structured interviews, rather than questionnaires, to determine whether each group's perception of the school's goals and their own differed (a) from each other, or (b) from those perceived by the other groups. The third modification involved the size of the population and the size of the sample. Whereas Seiler made use of several institutions and their employees, this study was restricted to a sample drawn from the staff of one school.

The primary reason for utilizing Seiler's procedures and findings was the lack of research carried out in an educational system. Also, it was felt that his findings, although taken from business and industry, should not be precluded because of their importance to administrators. The results of this study have been compared with those of Seiler, Litterer, Pondy, and other writers on conflict.

Initiation of action
from a perceived high
status group to a
perceived low status
group

Initiation of action
from a perceived low
status group to a
perceived high status
group

Many shared values

Few shared values

Open and free acceptance of the action and each other	Conflict Resolution possible through formal measures
Minor conflict Resolved quickly and informally	Open conflict Rejection or withdrawal from each other

FIGURE 1
MODIFIED FORM OF SEILER'S CONFLICT MATRIX

The modified matrix was used as a base for determining (a) whether a perceived status hierarchy existed, (b) the direction of the initiation of action, and (c) the degree of shared values.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made:

1. Intra-organizational conflict would be found and would be related in part, to the variables chosen for this study.
2. The school's administrative staff would be the prime initiators of actions required to resolve, avert, or use conflict.
3. Some or all of the following techniques would be used by the administrators to resolve, avert, or use conflict: (a) direct intervention and issuing of directives; (b) use of articulators and/or bridges between and among groups; (c) use of formal mediating groups or informal emergent groups; and (d) use of the informal school leaders.

Summary of Chapter II

Chapter two provided an explanation of the original conflict matrix developed by Seiler, which dealt with the possible causes of conflict within a complex organization. The matrix was limited to three variables, initiation of action, status position, and group values. The latter two were discussed to provide clarification regarding Seiler's measurement of values and status position.

Following the explanation of the conflict matrix on which this study was based, the modifications made in the original were presented.

The variables and the results of interactions among the groups, as reported by Seiler, were explained and the relationships between them were shown in Figure 1. Three assumptions based on these relationships were then stated.

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CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Bidwell's comments reflected the type of literature available which dealt with intra-organizational conflict within an educational setting.

To understand what schools are like as organizations -- what their characteristic structures, processes, and functional problems are -- we must now rely on empirical work . . . this empirical literature is fragmentary and discontinuous (Bidwell, 1965, (p. 972).

Seiler's (1961, p. 534), Lawrence's (1961, p. 570), and Smith's (1966) writings agreed. They also stated that the studies carried out had been rudimentary in form and provided almost no experimental designs for ascertaining whether intra-organizational conflict existed or not.

This chapter discusses the most significant literature related to the study.

I. CONDITIONS FOR CONFLICT

Dahrendorf (1958, pp. 172-175) regarded conflict as one of the general structural features of society. Schools, being a part of society, were subject to the same external pressures which led to conflict in society:

1. Every society is subjected at every moment to change.
2. Every society experiences social conflict at every moment.
3. Every element in a society contributes to its change.
4. Every society rests on constraint of some of its members by others.

Pondy (1967, pp. 298-299) and Litterer (1966) diagnosed the internal influences that led to conflict within industrial and commercial organizations. Their studies centered on the structure of the organization and the possible effects the structure might have on the behavior of individuals and groups. Thus, their writings probably related more closely to this study than most other writers'. Litterer (1966) expressed the findings as follows:

The many organizational structures which produce conflict seem to find four principal types of intervening variables or organizational situations. These are the win - lose situations (or competition over position), competition over resources or work arrangements, status incongruencies, and perpetual differences (p. 181).

Griffiths (1964, p. 114) noted that as organizations increased in size, their organizational structures became more complex and specialization occurred. Specialist groups were not uncommon in the schools and have become more prevalent today. As specialist groups appeared, a status hierarchy was introduced. Seiler (1961, pp. 534-546) indicated that people within organizations tended to be ranked internally according to a culturally determined status hierarchy. He also believed that the ranking would influence the nature of the relationships among groups, just as would the groups' values. When the status position and values were mutually accepted and shared, interaction among groups would not produce conflict. However, when a low status group interacted with a higher status group with different values, conflict ensued.

Thompson (1961, pp. 485-521) had outlined five primary and three secondary rights which he believed the superordinate held over the subordinates in a status hierarchy. When specialization and a hierarchical

structure existed in the same organization, tensions and conflict resulted "from the interactions between the principal behavior systems - the systems of rights (authority), deference (status), specialization and communicative interaction (pp. 519-521)."

Corwin (1965, p. 6) considered that conflict arose when the bureaucratic aspects of schools, such as job specialization, centralization of authority and standardization interfered with teachers who considered themselves professionals. The conflict would occur Corwin claimed because of a conflict of demands, bureaucratic versus professional.

Group values and the degree to which they are shared was mentioned throughout the available literature as being one of the major causes for conflict, or for co-operation. Seiler (1961, p. 541) stated that the first influence upon intergroup relations is mutuality of values. "If there is to be frequent, adaptable interaction among groups, they must share at least some significant values . . . (p. 541)." Homans (1950) and Smith (1966) recognized that group values determined the relationships among groups and the direction the relationships took. The general attitude toward the role played by values in conflict situations, was best reported by the writings of Seiler, which have been cited in Chapter II of this thesis.

II. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

School administrators should be aware of conditions which lead to conflict and they should also be familiar with the methods for managing conflict.

Litterer (1966, pp. 184-185) proposed three strategies which might be used to reduce conflict. The first strategy proposed is to maintain the system, but modify some of the elements in it to make the situation more workable. The second strategy is to alter or change the system by adding or replacing elements. Formal mediating groups composed of significant others and informal leaders could be drawn from the staff to create a buffer between the groups in conflict. The third strategy consists of changing the structure of the organization to eliminate the cause of the conflict. An analysis of the source of the conflict would make it possible to choose the appropriate strategy.

Studies by Likert (1967), Lonsdale (1964), and Schmidt and Tannenbaum (1960) indicate that an administrator should not attempt to reduce or eliminate conflict within the organization. He should develop the capacity to diagnose and handle conflict of all types.

Schmidt and Tannenbaum (1960, p. 107) suggested three ways of dealing with conflict under varying circumstances: (1) avoid, (2) repress, and (3) sharpen the differences. They warned that if conflict is avoided, creativity would be reduced. Repression would only lead to the causes of the conflict surfacing at a later date and they would probably create even greater problems. The last method, sharpen the differences, would clarify the conflict and allow it to be used as a measure for problem solving.

Likert (1967, pp. 586-587) suggested that administrators make use of the organizational structures at their command. Through them, and by utilizing their skills in effective interaction and mutual influence, they could facilitate interaction among the groups. Underlying

these conditions would be the confidence and trust the organization members had in each other, their loyalty to the organization, and their motivation to achieve the organization's objectives. The factors of confidence, loyalty, and co-operative motivation were, to Likert, the keys to using conflict.

Seiler (1961, pp. 562-565) advanced the theory that all the members of the system should be familiar with all the tasks performed in the system. When this occurred, each group would be confronted with the fact that all groups depended on each other for completion of the goals of the organization. To facilitate better co-ordination and hence lessen the possibility of conflict, he emphasized the following:

Management is easier if the sizes (not only in number of persons but in total responsibility for a part of the total task) of the units it directly co-ordinates are roughly equal. Under conditions of relatively equal power among subunits the manager can rely upon the self-regulation (or equilibrium), which is inherently more likely among peer groups than among groups of unequal value (p. 565).

These concepts and theories, although focused on business and industrial concerns could be equated to an educational setting. They could be used to explain the rationale for dividing schools into divisions of approximately equal sizes, and the appointment of additional administrators as assistant principals and department heads.

III. CONCLUSION

The preceding pages have attempted to review the literature which dealt with those facets of conflict included in this study. No attempt was made to include the multitude of writings dealing with conflict as encompassed in the ideas of tensions, wars, disagreements or discords.

Nor does the literature cited include interpersonal, intergroup or social conflict. The materials were chosen to support the choice of a case study which was severely restricted in its scope.

The complexity of the school organization under study made it infeasible to investigate all types of conflict which could arise. Also, as Culbertson (1960) stated,

Since cases are written records designed to capture a slice of reality of school administration, the same problem is met when one seeks the total meaning of a case. There is no vantage point from which one can grasp the entire reality of a single case. Thus, the student . . . is faced with the problem of selecting the most significant perspective or perspectives for analyzing the experience encompassed . . . (p. 368).

Summary of Chapter III

Chapter three dealt with a review of the literature which emphasized the conditions for conflict, and conflict management. The former described status position, group values, and job specialization as being three of the most common influences exerted on organizations. It was noted that the interaction of these influences often resulted in the presence of conflict-producing pressures in organizations. The relationship between organizational structure, group behavior, and conflict was presented.

The latter outlined various suggestions and strategies advanced for diagnosing and handling conflict. The most prevalent suggestion was that administrators should use conflict to improve the functioning of the organization. This could be accomplished by the administrators utilizing the organizational structures at their command and their own skills for facilitating group interaction.

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CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Chapter four describes the sample, data collection procedures, and an overview of the method used to analyze the data, and report the findings of this study. Throughout the following chapters, reference will be made to the Prairie City Composite High School which is a pseudonym for the school in which the research took place. It is used to ensure anonymity.

Choice of the School

Prairie City Composite was chosen because its size and organizational structure indicated that it was a complex school according to the definition of a complex school used in the present study. Secondly, there appeared to be a hierarchy of status positions within the school with each level of the hierarchy having definite group values. Therefore, this school met the requirements necessary for the application of the conflict matrix.

Sample

The sample was drawn from a staff of one hundred thirty-eight teachers and nine administrators.

Administrators for this study include the principal, two assistant principals, and six vice-principals. Department heads, guidance personnel and subject teachers have been classified as teachers.

Individual letters (see Appendix A) were distributed to administrative and teaching personnel requesting their assistance in the study. Each individual was given the opportunity to accept or reject

the request. Of the one hundred and forty-seven letters distributed, seventy were returned. Fifty-eight persons agreed to be interviewed and twelve replied in the negative. Table I summarizes the distribution of replies according to administrative, academic, commercial, and technical divisions within the school.

From the fifty-eight affirmative replies a random sample of thirty was chosen, using a random sample table. The teachers and administrators were arranged in alphabetical order and assigned a number from one to fifty-eight. The table was entered arbitrarily and thirty members chosen. The results were as follows: (a) administrators, two, (b) academic teachers, fifteen, (c) commercial teachers, five, and (d) technical teachers, eight.

The number of "past" administrative and teaching personnel available for interviews was restricted. A majority of them are deceased while others no longer reside in the city in which the interviews were carried out. Eight were contacted and four agreed to be interviewed. Thus, this portion of the sample was not randomly chosen but was dictated by the circumstances.

Data Collection

Two methods were used to collect the necessary data.

1. Information regarding the establishment and development of the Prairie City Composite High School was obtained from the yearbooks and printed school papers and from informal interviews with past and present teaching and administrative staff members.

2. The information required regarding perceived status, values, initiation of action, and conflict was gathered by utilizing the

TABLE I
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES REGARDING
PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

Division	Number in Division	Number of Replies	Affirmative Replies	Negative Replies	No Reply
Administrative	9	7	7	0	2
Academic	78	34	27	7	44
Commercial	14	5	5	0	9
Technical	46	24	19	5	22
Totals	147	70	58	12	77

structured interview technique. Appendix B provides a sample of the questions posed to past and present staff members and administrative personnel. The interview schedule was structured in such a manner that the interviewer could deviate whenever it was felt the results would be beneficial to the study. In some cases the structured interview schedule was discarded in favor of a completely informal interview. The informal procedures were most effective with the administrative and guidance personnel due to their more universal involvement with all divisions in the school.

In two cases the interviewee provided valuable information without the interviewer having to ask a single question.

The Instrument

The interview schedule, was constructed primarily to provide guidelines for the interviews with the school personnel. It consists of sixty-eight items, fifty-eight free response questions and ten forced choice questions (see Appendix B).

The questions were formulated in order to encourage the interviewee to provide information, both solicited and unsolicited, regarding perceived status positions, initiation of action, the values held by the teacher and the division of the school in which he taught, areas of conflict, and methods used to avoid, curtail, or utilize inter-divisional conflict. Overlapping questions were used to validate responses given to previous items.

Overview of Analysis

The data collected were categorized according to the three variables presented on the modified matrix, Figure I, in chapter two.

The responses indicated the existence of a status hierarchy, but from that point on did not correspond to the findings as recorded by Seiler (1961, p. 542). Therefore, it was necessary to determine why the findings of this study, regarding conflict, differed from those reported by Seiler.

Two sets of values had been recorded, (1) overall school values, and (2) the values subscribed to by individual divisions of the school. It should be realized that the responses given to the interviewer must be regarded as measures of attitudes, or alternatively, of perceptions. This remains as a constant factor throughout the remainder of the analysis.

The variable which dealt with the direction of the initiation of action was also determined from the responses.

Because the findings were significantly different from those of Seiler (1961), Litterer (1966), and Smith (1966), plus other writers on conflict, the reasons for the differences had to be examined. The responses to queries designated to indicate conflict were then compared to the reported results of the interaction among the variables. The direction of initiation of action was determined and contrasted with the results of the action, the value structures of the groups involved, and their perception of their own status position. These results were then compared with the information which had been elicited in response to questions dealing with perceived conflict and its results. The pattern of "no conflict" began to appear. New enquiries into the possible reasons for the lack of conflict were made and these responses were then gathered and classified. From this juncture the final step was to examine the

history and development of the Prairie City Composite High School in light of the current findings. This was carried out to determine the effects that past administrators and their staffs had on the present situation.

Summary of Chapter IV

Chapter four indicated that the sample of twenty-eight teachers and two administrators was drawn randomly from fifty-eight affirmative replies to a request for participation in the study. The responses came from a population of one hundred thirty-eight teachers and nine administrators, comprising the instructional and administrative staff of a complex secondary school.

The method of data collection was described and consisted of a study of past publications of the school and structured interviews with past and present administrative and teaching personnel.

The interview schedule was designed to determine whether a status hierarchy existed, who initiated action and the direction, the value structure of the school and of the individual divisions. A second purpose was to determine whether conflict existed and its probable causes as related to status, action, and values. If conflict was not apparent, then the instrument was to determine why there was no conflict.

The overview of the analysis indicated the technique to be used for determining why inter-divisional conflict was not apparent.

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CHAPTER V

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRAIRIE CITY COMPOSITE HIGH SCHOOL¹

Introduction

The fictitious name Prairie City Composite High School has been chosen to protect the anonymity of the actual school in which this study was carried out. The school was selected because it met the requirements of a complex school as defined for this study.

The city in which the school is located is on the western Canadian plains and has grown from a small trading community to a city of over 300,000 residents. Paralleling the growth of the city has been the growth of the school, from six teachers educating one hundred and fifty students, to a staff exceeding one hundred and forty teachers educating over twenty-five hundred students.

Because many of the findings reported in the succeeding chapter have their roots in the school's past, an abbreviated account of the history and development of the Prairie City Composite High School is presented.

Early History and Development

The name first given to the school, in 1912, was Prairie City High School. Figure 2 illustrates the simplicity of the organization during the early years. The principal's task was relatively straightforward as there was only one course of study, no need for departments

¹The information regarding the history and development of the school was gathered by researching the school's yearbooks and newspapers from 1914 to the present, and through personal interviews with past and present staff members.

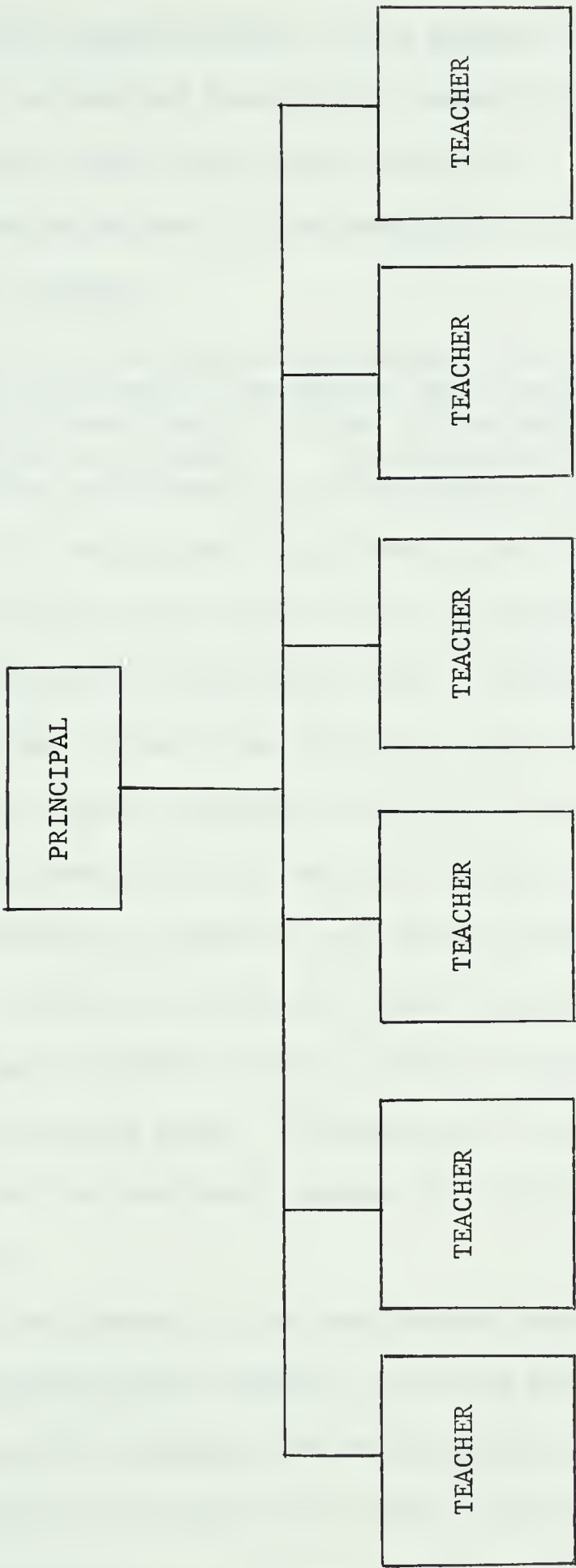


FIGURE 2
1912
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART PRAIRIE CITY HIGH SCHOOL

or subject specialization, and a single teaching function. With a single purpose and face-to-face communication among staff members, a cohesive staff relationship was built. The singleness of purpose was best enunciated by the Honorable A. G. MacKay, K. C., in the 1914 school yearbook.

It is the duty of the State to give every child of the State such Educational training as shall hereafter tend to make each child a most useful citizen of the State. Do not multiply purely scholastic schools . . . let vocational training be given, suitable to the requirements of each centre (p. 21).

It would appear from MacKay's writing that the value placed in education was the preparation of young people for a vocation. However, the Prairie City High School staff's dedication was focused primarily on academic rather than vocational achievement. Thus, when the demand for more direct vocational training became stronger there was the distinct possibility of conflict arising due to such factors as competition for resources and deviating goals.

Conflict was avoided though because the number of students desiring vocational training² taxed the physical resources of the school to the breaking point. Consequently, in September, 1914, those students desiring the vocational courses transferred to a newly constructed school.

The removal of the specialized courses decreased the possibility of inter-divisional conflict occurring within the school. Had these courses been retained, the organizational situations of win-lose, competition over resources, status incongruencies, and perpetual

²Vocational training during this period consisted of specialized courses in business subjects.

differences, as described in Litterer's study (1961, p. 179), could have arisen and caused inter-divisional conflict. One of the positive results of this move was the formation of a definite pattern of intragroup relationships and attitudes between the two schools. The basic values and philosophies were the same within both schools. Mutual respect was fostered because each staff was contributing knowledge to its clients without having to compete for the students. Each realized that the other was meeting and carrying out a necessary function in education. The latter is supported by the writing of F. C. McConnell (1914) who stressed that schools must be provided for those who wish academic competence and can attain it, as well as schools for the student who wishes "to go out and take up a trade . . . he would be throwing away time to go to college (p. 25)."

A belief shared by both schools was that if one institution could not do something for a student, then perhaps the other one could. Rivalry between the schools for achievement and scholastic excellence was not allowed to interfere with the primary function of the schools, the education of young people. This ideal has been carried on to the present, therefore, eliminating a possible cause of inter-divisional conflict.

The period 1914-1949 saw relatively few changes in the curriculum or physical facilities at Prairie City High. However, significant developments were initiated and expanded in the educational thought, philosophy and value structure of the school. Many of the developments have carried through to the present and have been responsible for the current situation existing in the Prairie City Composite High School.

The purely academic approach to education was criticized by the school principal in 1928. Addressing the students in the Yearbook (1928-29) he stressed that each student must be provided with the opportunity for a more complete life, based upon his own selection of a vocation. Too often the schools train for the academic professions only and it is wrong because some people "do not wish to go on or cannot, therefore there must be a more liberal type of curriculum which will provide training for the 'ordinary' vocations (p. 6)."

Vocational conferences were established in 1934 to provide high school students with information concerning vocational opportunities available to them and the qualifications necessary for entrance into each vocation.

These two developments did much to condition both staff and students toward acceptance of courses in the vocations, which were to follow in later years.

The intervention of the Second World War halted plans for the development and institution of more liberal courses of study and plans for physical expansion of school plant and equipment. However, the war helped to focus attention once again upon the developing philosophy of the school, which in part stated,

We are proud of our past graduates and proud of what the school can do for students both academically and vocationally. Our main concern is that each student find what he desires to do and then Prairie City High will attempt to give him the skills and the tools with which to accomplish his purpose. . . . It behooves each one of us to retain that individuality as far as possible (Yearbook, 1948, p. 4).

A Major Change

The problems of overcrowded facilities, outdated courses, and an archaic educational system led to the first major change in the curriculum and physical facilities of Prairie City High School.

The curriculum was expanded in 1949 to include: Industrial Arts, Commercial, and Academic programmes. The inclusion of these programmes led to the adoption and use of the terms academic division, commercial division, and technical division. Also, the school had now begun the process of change from a simple to a complex organization. This process has continued until the present and appears to be far from being complete even today.

A new structure had been built on the same campus as the existing Prairie City High. It was in the new building that the academic and technical divisions took residence, each in a separate wing. The administration of the school was placed in the hands of one principal and an assistant. The old school building was occupied by the commercial division which had been moved back to the campus after an absence of thirty-five years. The existing principal of the commercial school remained as principal of the commercial division. Because of the new programmes the school was renamed to the Prairie City Composite High School. Figure 3 illustrates the organizational structure as it appeared in 1949.

To complicate matters, there were instances when the two schools met as a single body, under joint principalship, and at other times they met as individual staffs. Each principal was responsible for the teachers, students, and programmes within his own school. Joint responsibility occurred whenever staff or student activities involved both

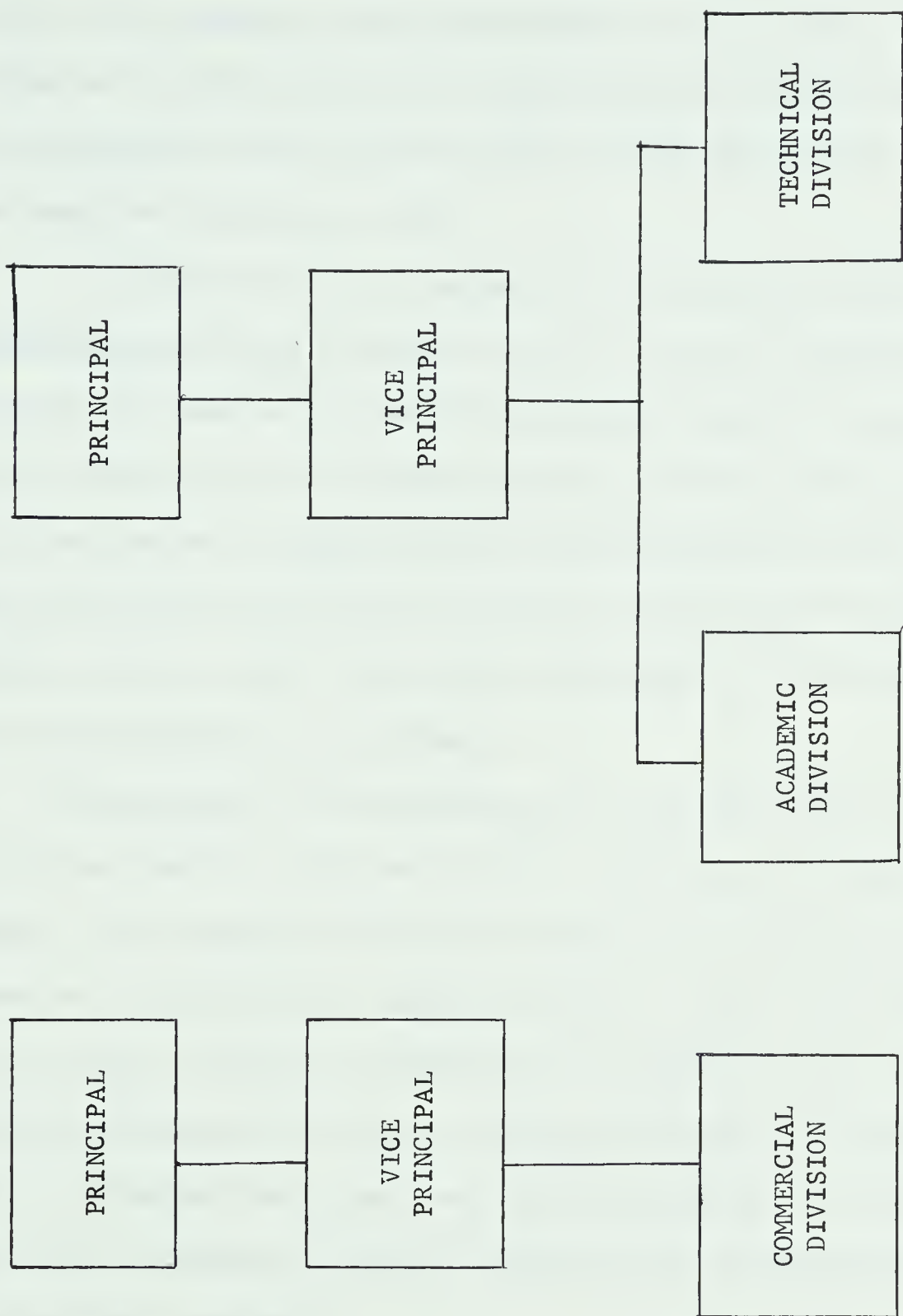


FIGURE 3

1949

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART - PRAIRIE CITY COMPOSITE HIGH SCHOOL

segments of the school. Integration of activities, philosophies, and policies was carried out as often as possible, resulting in a spirit of co-operation and mutual respect at all levels. This was echoed in the editorial of the first yearbook (1949-50) published by the amalgamated schools which stated "the merging of the two schools has been for the best (p. 50)."

In 1954 the three divisions of the school were placed under the administration of one principal and two assistant principals. Those teachers who were on the staff during this period of transition have stated unequivocally that the personality of the principal appointed at this time was a crucial factor in determining the tone of the school. They stated that he did much to weld the staff into one unit with a single purpose, namely, the overall development of each student rather than just academic accomplishment.

Each segment of the teaching force realized that unless inter-divisional conflict could be avoided, the goal of the school could not be met. They realized that each student was an individual for whom there was a position in a complex society. Their task, therefore, was to find the programme or combination of programmes which would best educate and equip the student to enter and succeed in the adult society. With a philosophy and a goal such as was expounded, there was no room for petty jealousies to develop between areas in regard to the achievement of their students.

Another factor which could be responsible for the smooth transition was the planning of the physical facilities of the school. Careful attention was paid to the placement of classrooms, shops, laboratories,

and staff facilities. An attempt was made to provide each division with sufficient room, equipment, and facilities to meet their demands.

The school situation remained the same until 1960 when the federal government passed the Technical and Vocational Act allowing for federal funds to be invested in the building and equipping of technical and vocational schools across Canada. The results of the Act for Prairie City Composite High School can be seen in the developments after 1962.

Another Major Change

The beginning of the fall term, 1963, saw the opening of another school on the campus of Prairie City Composite. The new building housed the Prairie City Vocational School which offered newer and more sophisticated vocational programmes such as electronics, power mechanics, beauty culture, food preparation, and data processing to name just a few. Once again each building was administered by a separate principal and had its own teaching staff and student body.

Although there was a degree of rivalry between the two institutions, the basic philosophy and values were primarily the same. As a result no irreconcilable differences were reported to the interviewer. When the two schools amalgamated in 1965 and became known as the Prairie City Composite High School, the two staffs had few adjustments to make.

With the amalgamation the school doubled in size both in population and area. However, the administration was placed in the hands of one principal and two assistant principals. With increasing enrolments, a proliferation of new vocational and academic courses, and students interchanging from building to building and programme to programme, the organizational structure had to change.

The reasons for this change are illustrated by the writings of both Smith and Miller. Smith (1966) stated the following:

Organizational size inevitably gives rise to specialization and proliferation of organizational roles. Because of this, increasing reliance is placed upon supervisory roles and the supporting staff functions to achieve the necessary co-ordination (p. 506).

Miller (1959, pp. 243-272) contends that specialization, as defined by Smith, requires co-ordination to accomplish the integrated performance of the whole task, which in this instance is the education of young people. Because co-ordination is so important eventually, at some critical point, an individual or subgroup will be separated out and given the responsibility for controlling and co-ordinating the work of the total group. At this point the organization moves from "simple system" to "complex system" status.

Figure 4 illustrates, in a somewhat simplified form, the organizational structure of the Prairie City Composite High School as it is today. It also lends credence to Smith's statements. All of the complex relationships between and among the various levels of administration cannot be shown graphically in one figure.

There are, basically, four levels to the administrative hierarchy. The principal comprises the first level and it is his task to co-ordinate all activities and personnel within the school. He is assisted at the second level, by a first assistant principal of the academic division and a first assistant principal of the vocational division. The former is responsible for the English, Social Science, Mathematics, Science and Modern Languages departments. To assist him there are two second assistant principals from the third level of administration, who are

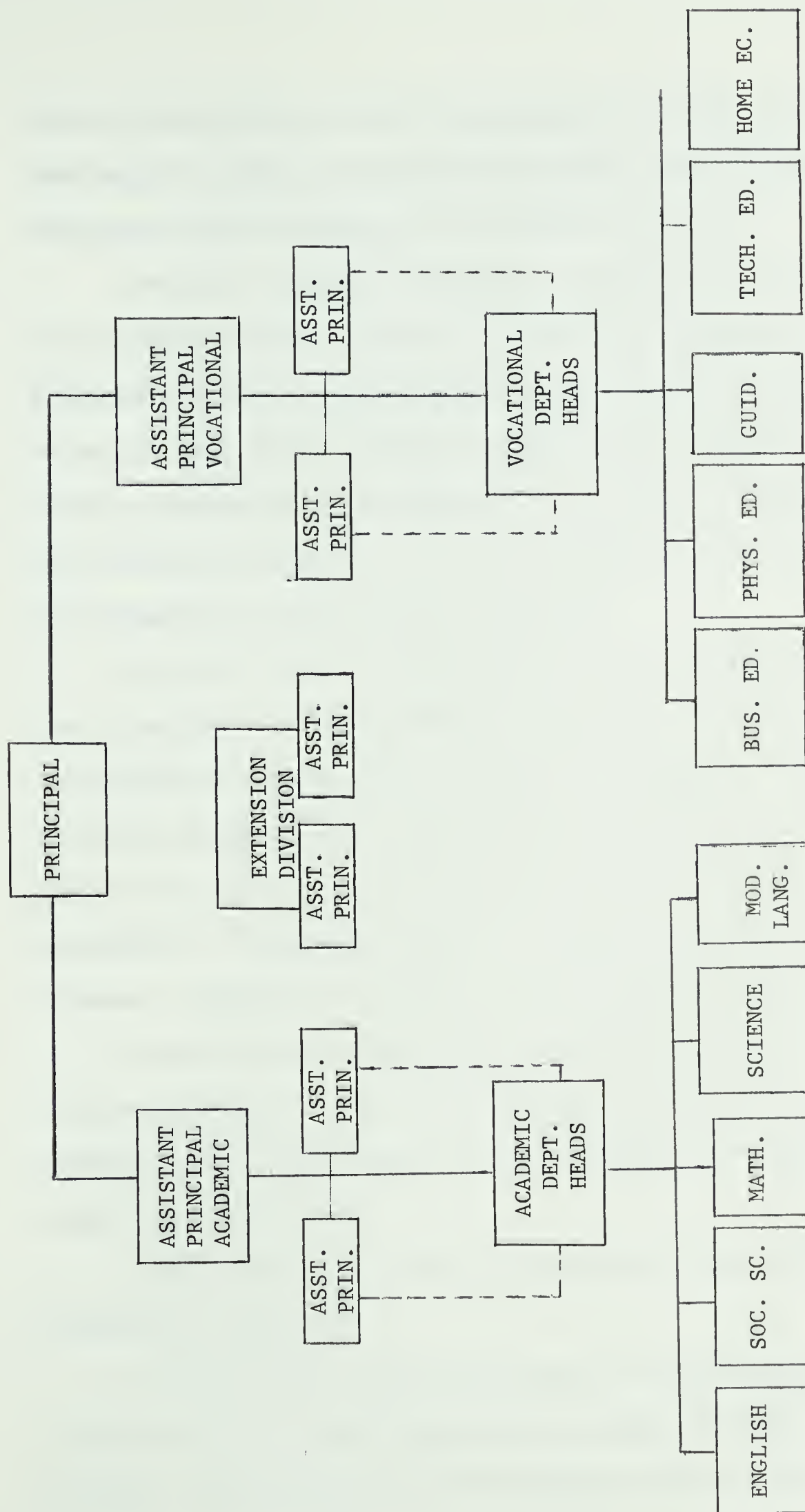


FIGURE 4

1968

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART - PRAIRIE CITY COMPOSITE SCHOOL

directly responsible to the first assistant principal and the principal. Each second assistant principal has specific duties delegated to him which are within the scope of the academic division.

The first assistant principal, vocational division, is responsible for the functions carried out in the Business Education, Physical Education, Guidance, Technical Education, and Home Economics departments. He too has two second assistant principals from the third level of administration, who are directly responsible to him and to the principal. In the vocational division, as in the academic division, specific duties are delegated to each assistant principal.

The third level of administration also contains two second assistant principals who are responsible directly to the principal for the functioning of the extension division of the school. These men are primarily concerned with those functions carried on within the school that do not fall under the jurisdiction of the two first assistant principals. One example would be the administration of adult evening classes. Therefore, the third level is comprised of six administrators.

The fourth and final level of administrators is composed of the various department heads who are delegated authority over the respective members of their departments. These individuals are responsible to the three levels above them.

There are however several complicating factors which have not been shown in Figure 4.

The department heads meet together in their respective divisions with the first and second assistant principals to discuss problems and policies. Some meetings are held separately while others are joint

meetings. It is at this level that most of the school policies are determined. From here the department heads move back to their teachers to discuss and disseminate the policies and information.

A second factor which lies in the role of the guidance, or pupil personnel department. Although this department falls under the authority of the vocational first assistant, it also deals with students from the academic division. Because it crosses division lines this department becomes responsible to three individuals, namely, the first assistant principals and the principal. The degree of authority exercised by each first assistant is unequal, with the vocational first assistant having what might be called seniority.

Although it appears from an examination of Figure 4 that the two first assistants appear to have the same degree of authority, in reality they do not. An example will probably serve best to indicate their relative positions. A student who has been misbehaving in an English class would be required to report to the administration office. One of the second assistant principals of the academic division would deal with the offender. If the matter has to be referred to someone higher in the administration, it would proceed to the first assistant. Once the problem has reached this level one might assume that the next step would be referral to the principal, but that is not the case. When the situation demands that further action be taken, the matter is turned over to the first assistant of the vocational division. Only if he cannot deal with the case will it then be placed in the hands of the principal. However, the converse is not true. The problems that cannot be handled by the first assistant of the vocational division

are not given to the corresponding administrator of the academic division. All cases that cannot be resolved by the vocational first assistant move directly to the principal.

Other formal relationships exist, but the ones already stated should be sufficient to indicate the complexity of the organizational structure of the Prairie City Composite High School.

Summary of Chapter V

History and development. Attention was focused upon the physical and educational development of the Prairie City Composite High School from a simple organization to a complex organization. The intention was to provide the background necessary for the understanding of the school climate and practices as they exist today.

A study of the past indicated that administrative leadership was partly responsible for the smooth transition that occurred and the spirit of cooperation that now prevails. Culbertson, Jacobson and Reller (1960) found that within a complex organization the achievement and maintenance of morale became crucial in promoting cooperative activity. "Administration will be concerned then, not only about getting a job done, but also about interpersonal relations and esprit de corps of the persons doing the job (p. 378)." Throughout the period of development of the school it can be seen that conscious efforts were made to achieve this goal.

Philosophy and values. The philosophy of education, with its concomitant values, is of prime importance to the interpretation and understanding of the findings reported in Chapter VI. Therefore, it was essential that the philosophy and values be traced, where possible,

from the inception of the Prairie City High School through to its successor, the Prairie City Composite High School.

The basic philosophy appeared to be that the purpose of the school is to prepare its clients for a vocation. This philosophy appears to have undergone no radical change. The values have also remained fairly constant although modifications have had to be made to maintain pace with the changing times.

This chapter has attempted to evince today's attitudes as being founded as early as 1912 and that few changes have been made in the school's basic philosophy and value structure.

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CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter deals with the analysis of the responses to the interviews conducted with the administrative and teaching personnel, past and present, of the Prairie City Composite High School.

The order of presentation follows the specific statement of the problem and sub-problems sections. The initial step is the development of the variables, namely the perceived status structure of the school, the values, and the direction of initiation of action. From this point the discussion centers about two topics, the lack of inter-divisional conflict within the school, and the possible reasons that have brought about this situation.

I. STATUS STRUCTURE

Responses to those items dealing with the status position of the three divisions of the school, academic, commercial, and technical, indicated that teachers perceived a status hierarchy.

Procedure. The teachers were asked to rank the following educational divisions in order of importance, according to their own personal perceptions: (1) technical training, (2) academic training, (3) commercial training. The order of choice was to indicate the ranking; first choice identified the division deemed most important and third choice indicated the lowest ranked division.

Findings. Table II summarizes the responses of the teachers classified by the division in which they were teaching.

TABLE II
PERCEIVED STATUS HIERARCHY
BY DEPARTMENTS*

Division	Ranking of Perceived Status Position								
	Academic			Commercial			Technical		
	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd
Academic	12	1	-	-	9	4	1	3	9
Commercial	4	1	-	-	4	-	-	1	3
Technical	8	-	-	-	3	5	-	7	1

*Two academic division teachers and one commercial division teacher assigned an equal rank to all three divisions.

Number of academic teachers responding - 15

Number of commercial teachers responding - 5

Number of technical teachers responding - 8

Total teacher responses - 28

Twelve academic teachers ranked their division first while two replied that no differentiation between divisions could be made and therefore ranked all three as having equal importance and position. One individual placed the technical division first in the status hierarchy, academic second, and classified the commercial as the lowest. Nine teachers indicated that the commercial division was second in the hierarchy, while four placed it last. The technical division was perceived as being second by only three academicians while being placed last nine times. The results indicate that the teachers of academic subjects perceive themselves as having the highest status position in the school.

Of the five commercial teachers interviewed, four indicated the academic division as having the highest rank, followed by the commercial division. One individual classified all three divisions as being equal in status. Three of the five teachers interviewed ranked the technical division lowest in the status hierarchy. The results substantiated the findings recorded for the academic teachers' perceptions.

All of the technical teachers placed the academic division at the top of the status hierarchy. Five of the eight chose their own division as second while one indicated it was lowest. The remaining teachers believed the technical and commercial divisions were equal in status although below the academic.

Discussion. The results of the interviews indicated that a definite status hierarchy existed within the school. The academic division was an almost unanimous choice as the division with the highest status. The commercial division was placed in the second status position by 57 per cent of the respondents, while the technical

division was ranked second by 32 per cent of those interviewed.

Both the commercial and technical divisions perceived themselves as following the academic section of the school in status. Most teachers indicated during the interview that they would prefer the classifications to have been academic and vocational. The latter would include the technical and commercial divisions of the school. Therefore, the status hierarchy would be a two rather than a three level hierarchy, with the academic division being accorded the highest rank, followed by the vocational division.

A second question regarding a perceived status hierarchy was then posed. Teachers were asked to indicate whether they were aware of a status hierarchy as perceived by the general public, other staff members, parents, and students.

Twenty-five responded that the general public, parents, students, and teachers from other schools expressed opinions at various times, that indicated that such a hierarchy existed. When queried as to the status positions conveyed to them, twenty-four reported that the academic subjects were placed at the top, commercial subjects second, and the technical subjects lowest. Therefore, this substantiated the previous responses.

The conclusion reached was that a status hierarchy existed with, as most teachers expressed, two levels rather than three, academic and vocational. Consequently, the academic division was perceived as having more status than the vocational division.

II. VALUES

The identification of the values, held by the three divisions of the Prairie City Composite High School, was a difficult task. Each person interviewed was made aware of the definition of values as used in the study, but some persisted in presenting their own interpretation. However, most of the interviewees restricted themselves to, or were in agreement with, the concept of values as previously defined.

Procedure. Each teacher was asked to express his perception of the values held by (a) the school, and (b) the particular division of the school in which he was currently teaching. To decrease the incidence of misinterpretation of the term value, as much as possible, questions seven and eight of the interview schedule (see Appendix B) were preceded by the operational definition of the term. These two questions provided the starting point from which a discussion of values could be carried on with each interviewee. The responses were recorded separately, thereby providing four individual records of values; the first indicated the overall school values as perceived by each individual; the second, third, and fourth respectively provided some indication of the values held by the academic, commercial, and technical divisions, as perceived by the interviewee. The four lists were compared to determine the extent to which values were shared by the divisions.

Findings. There were no significant differences among the groups in the values shared. In fact, the findings indicated that each division shared the same values, which appear to have been drawn from the overall school values.

The most predominant value held was that the school must be concerned with the individuality of each student when "individuality is the sum total of characteristics that set one individual apart from all others (Gerber, 1964, p. 193)." To this end all divisions believed that students must be provided with the opportunity to participate in learning experiences in those areas which interested them, and in which they could meet with a measure of success. They further agreed that all students must be allowed to sample as many vocations as they possibly could during their tenure at the school.

Closely allied to individuality was the thought that because these students were being prepared for life, they must be allowed to exercise certain choices within a suitable planned educational programme. That is, each student would have an individual programme built around his interests, desires and capabilities. The programmes would allow students to move from one area of education to another as their potential was discovered and developed. All divisions felt that too often students had been channeled, too early in their school careers, into a rigid programme that did not allow exploration into all aspects of life and vocational processes. Thus, the student's right to make choices was placed high on the list of values.

Many teachers were of the opinion that one of the values the school subscribed to was the provision of a broad general education. This was to develop the thought processes within each student so that he could relate knowledge to everyday life situations thereby appreciating his role in society. This education should nurture proper attitudes and feelings of responsibility towards his vocation while fostering an

appreciation for and an understanding of the better things in life.

Other values mentioned, but with less emphasis, included the following: preparation for specific vocations, training students to express themselves, enrichment, and teaching students pride and satisfaction in a job well done.

One value not directly concerned with the students was professionalism. Each division was concerned with the growth and development of teachers and teaching. The consensus of opinion indicated that all staff members were perceived to be professionals acting in a professional manner. Because of this, and the findings already reported regarding the status hierarchy, there were no apparent feelings of status anxiety. The conflict situation which could arise due to status and value incongruencies was negated.

Discussion. Although not all of the values expressed by the staff have been reported here, a sufficient number have been mentioned to indicate the significance of the findings. When the values expounded were put together and compared almost complete agreement among divisions was found. Any areas of disagreement were usually personal in nature.

The educational and personal welfare of each student was uppermost in the minds of those persons interviewed. They were in accordance with the thought as expressed by an academic teacher who stated that if a student could not cope with the one discipline he should be encouraged to move into another because each served a most useful purpose in education.

The second variable, values, has shown that at the Prairie City Composite High School, most of the personnel are in agreement. Relating

the findings to the conflict matrix, it is possible to say that the sub-section "many shared values" would be heavily weighted and the sub-section "few shared values" would not be significantly weighted.

III. DIRECTION OF INITIATION OF ACTION

This variable was concerned with the direction in which ideas, materials, orders, instructions, and the like moved among groups. Did they flow from a high status group downward to the lowest, from a low group upward, or from the middle group outward?

Procedure. The teachers were asked, "Who initiates action within the school?" Their opinions were also solicited regarding this matter when questions were posed regarding the allocation of activity supervision, social function initiation, and staff and departmental meetings.

Findings. The most significant finding was the apparent lack of inter-divisional activity or initiation of action. Most responses indicated that any actions which were brought about were at the intra-group level, that is, within the academic, commercial, or technical divisions, not among them. This resulted, the teachers believed, because of (a) the size and complexity of the entire school organization, (b) the physical arrangement of the school whereby there was an academic wing and a vocational wing, and (c) the relative autonomy given to each division of the school.

The overall largeness of the school has dictated the necessity for a large administrative staff which has specialized in the problems peculiar to the separate divisions. Figure 4 indicated the complexity

and the degree of specialization. To facilitate administrative processes and student teacher movements, the buildings had areas which were designated for each division. Thus the classrooms and facilities required by each division were concentrated in specified areas. This resulted in closely-knit groups in each of these areas which initiated actions for their own divisions. This was substantiated by the reports of staff members who stated that their division did not meet with any other division to deal with mutual educational problems, except at staff meetings. Each expressed the opinion that there was no inter-divisional interaction, therefore, there could be no initiation of action from one group to another. The three individuals who voiced different opinions indicated, when questioned further, that the inter-divisional interaction was primarily initiated on an individual-to-individual basis, rather than group-to-group.

An attempt was made to determine whether a particular group provided leadership at staff meetings by initiating actions aimed at solving differences of opinions, meeting schoolwide problems, or bringing about desired changes. Again the responses indicated that inter-divisional actions were at a minimum. Staff meetings were regarded as informational in nature and little action ever resulted from these meetings. If, however, action had to be taken, no division of the school dominated either in the initiation of the action or in the committees established to carry out the wishes of the staff.

School leadership was perceived as being non-existent. Twenty-two teachers expressed the opinion that there was no leadership shown by a particular group of individuals. However, they stated that when

leadership was required, all divisions became involved when their talents dictated their participation.

Discussion. The most predominant factor which would indicate little direction of initiation of action was the size of the school itself. Administrators and teaching personnel emphasized the fact that, because of the size, it was virtually impossible to involve all divisions in any one activity where one division would be required to assume the role of initiator.

Decisions regarding school-wide action on common problems were generally arrived at during the course of administrative-department head meetings. The decisions were then passed on to the teachers at either the regular staff meetings or at department meetings. Thus, the originators of the actions remained anonymous thereby circumventing the possibility of conflict arising due to the direction of the initiation of action.

When asked if it mattered who initiated actions, the teachers replied with a qualified no. The qualification was that as long as a student or a group of students were going to benefit from the resulting action, there would be wholehearted support. However, if the action was initiated to benefit an individual teacher or a group of teachers, co-operation would probably be withheld depending on the issue, and conflict would probably result. Each interviewee was asked to cite an example of either action, co-operation or conflict. All related examples which dealt with co-operation. The following is a composite example drawn from their replies.

The technical division decided to sponsor an evening during which the electronics department would be highlighted. The purpose

was twofold, (a) to provide information regarding the role of electronics in our lives today and in the future, and (b) to raise funds for the purchase of a new encyclopedia of electronic sciences. The persons benefitting from such an evening were those who were taking electronics as a part of their programme. The commercial division was asked to prepare stencils for the programme and to provide staff and students for various and sundry activities prior to, during, and after the evening. Other technical departments were involved as they prepared display stands, provided printing services, electrical services, and personnel. The academic division was asked to participate by preparing a historical review of electronics, writing and assisting in the advertising of the evening, and they also provided personnel who assisted wherever possible. Each division was required to donate extra time and effort to make the evening a success. The result was wholehearted co-operation by all divisions. They did not care who initiated the action, what concerned them was that the students would benefit from such an evening.

Seiler (1961, p. 542) believed that conflict would be inevitable when a low status group initiated action for a high status group, even if values were shared. The preceding example would indicate that at Prairie City Composite the direction of initiation of action is not important and does not necessarily lead to conflict.

IV. SUMMARY OF THE VARIABLES

The modified matrix presented in chapter two (Figure 1), used three variables to determine the degree of conflict that would arise under various conditions. The variables, perceived status hierarchy, values,

and the direction of initiation of action, were determined by conducting structured interviews with a random sample of administrative and teaching staff personnel.

The results of the interviews indicated the existence of a perceived status hierarchy with the academic division recognized as the highest in status, followed by the commercial and technical divisions respectively. The consensus of opinion however, indicated that the hierarchy should contain two classifications only, academic and vocational. The vocational division would include all commercial and technical programmes taught in the Prairie City Composite High School.

Shared values, which had been classified as many and few in the matrix, were discovered to fall primarily within the category of many shared values. The values professed by each division, the teachers, and the school, were almost identical. The prime concern was for the education of the individual and the maintenance of his individuality. This view was held by the divisions separately and collectively as being their first and most important function in education. At no time was it found that values clashed between or among divisions.

Initiation of action was found to be lacking as almost all direction came from the administration downward. This fact did not concern the majority of persons interviewed as they believed the initiation of action should be and must remain a function of the administrative staff. However, when actions were initiated by any division, co-operation was given if the action would be beneficial to the student body either as individuals or as a whole, the school, or the community. The status position of the initiator was of no consequence when the preceding conditions were met.

Thus, when the findings related to the variables are placed on the matrix, the expected conflict did not appear. There appeared to be free and open collaboration between and among all divisions. The conflict that appeared was confined to personality conflict within divisions and was not investigated because it was beyond the scope of this study.

An examination of the data collected and a reassessment of the development of Prairie City Composite was carried out to determine possible reasons why there was no apparent inter-divisional conflict.

V. DETERMINATION OF "NO CONFLICT"

The apparent absence of inter-divisional conflict was found attributable to many factors. The factors were categorized under three headings, (1) unsolicited reasons gathered from the data, (2) direct observations of the teachers, and (3) those found in the history and development of the school.

Conflict in organizations has been attributed to problems of communication among the parties involved, differences in basic interests and goals, and a lack of shared perceptions and attitudes among members at different echelons.

Communications. Inter-divisional conflict did not occur even though communication problems were evident. Intergroup communication was at a minimum both on the group and individual level. The teachers interviewed did not consider the lack of communication detrimental. Instead, they expressed the opinion that because they were placed in close proximity to the remainder of their divisional colleagues and there was little communication and interaction among the divisions,

there was less likelihood of conflict occurring. The limited communications and interactions helped to forestall possible procedural difficulties which might be encountered, group personality clashes, and the possibility of conflict over apparent cross purposes. The relative ignorance of the everyday procedures of the other divisions was viewed as an advantage as one method of avoiding conflict.

One-way communication, from the top down, was welcomed by the majority of the sample. They accepted this because only those communications deemed necessary were received. Detailed procedural instructions were only given when the situation dictated they be communicated. Otherwise, teachers were free from administrative pressures and treated as professionals. The twenty-eight teachers interviewed agreed that the lack of excessive administrative and intergroup communication led to stronger intragroup communication and hence cohesiveness within the division.

Interests and goals

A study of the values indicated agreement among the academic, commercial, and technical divisions, therefore, their interests and goals were probably similar. As previously noted, the basic focal point was the individuality of each student and the desire to help him realize his potential. Members of each division stressed the importance of providing each student with educational opportunities commensurate with his abilities and desires. They indicated that the school was organized, and rightly so, to accommodate all types of students. A common belief expressed by the vocational teachers was that every student should be challenged to gain as much expertise in the academic field as is possible, then to devote

the remaining time and effort to vocational subjects. On the other hand, the academic teachers praised the efforts of the vocational teachers in trying to provide each individual with an opportunity to succeed. None of the group felt he was receiving the rejects from another division. All were interested in providing each young person with as many opportunities as the school could provide, therefore, there was no conflict over differences in basic interests and goals.

An interest in improving not only their own area of the school but also in assisting the other areas wherever and whenever possible was displayed by the teachers at Prairie City Composite. This was tempered by mutual feelings of respect which kept the groups from interfering with each other, that is, the assistance was given when requested. The interaction which resulted was such that it fostered co-operation, not rivalry or conflict.

Shared perceptions and attitudes. One of the major perceptions was reported under status hierarchy. The same perception, that the academic division held the highest status, was held by a majority of the teachers interviewed. The values, interests and goals were shared as were teacher attitudes toward such items as initiation of action and student placement.

Predominant among the attitudes shared by the administration and all levels of the status hierarchy, was the attitude towards professionalism. Complete agreement was voiced by the interviewees that the entire staff was composed of professionals. None of the interviewees expressed an opinion that other staff members were not professional because they had different or fewer qualifications, or lacked practical

teaching experience. What most teachers looked for was the base upon which their fellow teachers' training was built. Seventeen indicated that all teachers should have as broad an educational background as possible before specializing, whereas seven disagreed and stated that teachers should specialize from the beginning of their training. Six offered no opinion. All but two concluded that the important factor was that all of the teachers had attained the necessary qualifications for teaching in their field, thereby giving Prairie Composite High a professional staff.

The mutual feelings of professionalism shared by all divisions discounted any thoughts that preferential treatment was accorded to one division to the exclusion of the others. Thus, the examination of the data revealed that the teachers and administrators shared many perceptions and attitudes, which left little room for conflict to arise.

Others. Additional factors were gleaned from the data which indicated possible reasons for no perceptible inter-divisional conflict.

Teachers remained in their own area of subject specialization and were given the opportunity to choose the courses they wished to teach. The net result was loyalty to one group only. Loyalty to more than one group can cause conflict when each makes conflicting demands upon the individual. The conflict can be compounded by dictating the courses each teacher must teach. At the Prairie City Composite, this type of conflict was avoided because teachers were not asked to teach outside of their area of specialization, and their choice of subject and grade level was adhered to as closely as possible. These actions were carried over when new or additional staff members were being sought.

Prosepective teachers were informed of the teaching areas available and asked whether they would agree to teaching in a particular area. If there was not outright acceptance, it was suggested they ask for a position with another school. These actions were consciously planned and executed by the administrative staff to create a situation wherein the staff would be happier because the number of possible areas of conflict had been reduced.

No apparent cliques were discovered. Those persons who met as groups did so because of the physical arrangement of the school. The largeness of the campus provided a safety valve against conflict. Teachers found that continued personality clashes could be avoided simply by disassociating themselves from one area of the building and moving to another. The incidence of inter-personal conflict was so minute that only one case was reported during the course of the interviews. Group conflict was so rare that none of those asked could recall any incidents at all. Again, the reasons advanced were connected to the size of the staff and the school which led to interaction among persons sharing the same educational interests and values.

Direct Observations

When it became obvious there was a definite lack of inter-divisional conflict, the teachers were queried as to the reasons why this situation existed. The following section summarizes those reasons most frequently advanced.

Strong leadership from the administrative staff and the department heads led to the attitude of respect that divisions of the school held for each other. Previous administrators had impressed their staffs with

the importance of vocational training for young people. Their attitude helped to dispel possible prejudices which could have become a part of the school when new courses in vocational training were introduced. Biddle (1966) stated "there is the significant prejudice against nouveaux arrivés, which results in their being accorded a lower prestige status . . . (p. 79." Although the vocational divisions were placed lower on the status hierarchy at the Prairie City Composite, their positions did not appear to be due to prejudice.

The present administration was respected for its strength, its treatment of teachers as professionals, its lack of interference and because it did not exert pressures on the division to conform. These qualities were looked upon as setting the tone for all personnel to follow. Thus, respect was built for each division, interference was negligible and pressures by one upon the remainder were avoided.

The department heads were regarded as the most influential staff members and were respected for the manner in which they carried out their functions. They were regarded as bridgers or articulators, by their department members and the administration. Through their efforts, minor differences among groups and individuals were settled before matters got out of hand. Articulators and bridgers were drawn from the definitions as presented by Iannaccone (1964, p. 234). The bridgers were those department heads from the academic, commercial and technical divisions who interacted regularly with each other. They became aware of common problems and were able to communicate solutions to their respective divisions. The articulators were less common because they had to belong to two groups at the same time. These individuals existed within

the division, and acted to avoid intergroup conflict which might have resulted in inter-divisional conflict. "Information flows through such articulations and bridges, and mutual adjustment between groups faced with common problems is facilitated by them (Iannaccone, 1964, p. 235)."

Not all of the bridgers and articulators were department heads or administrators. Some were strong individual teachers within the various divisions, whose knowledge of, and experience in, the school assisted them in recognizing the symptoms of conflict. Being professionals, working with professionals, their suggestions of possible measures for overcoming the symptoms and averting the conflict were accepted.

Domination of one division by another was looked on as being virtually impossible because the academic and vocational divisions were almost numerically equal. Thus, each division served as a check on the other and again conflict was reduced.

The term cohesive was used extensively by all persons interviewed. When an explanation was sought, a definite pattern evolved. The cohesion was brought about through the acceptance of universal values, attitudes and goals. The welfare of the student was uppermost in the minds of the teachers. They believed that the students' wishes must come first, where they were reasonable, and that because of this, all divisions were equally important. Consequently, there was no competition for students or resources, which might have led to inter-divisional conflict. Instead, interest was displayed in learning more about the entire school operation to facilitate the movement of students into those areas most suitable to them. This had resulted in a greater

movement of students across the three divisions and the students' problems became mutual divisional problems. The divisions had to meet and co-operate for the students' well being. The common measure became the degree of help given to the students, rather than what their achievement was.

History and Development

In dealing with students, with patients or with any group or nation, the first step is to see the world through their eyes, to enter into what they are trying to do however strange their behavior seems (Lee, 1952, p. 52).

From its inception the Prairie City Composite High School appeared to have adopted Lee's philosophy. Chapter V dealt with the actual history and development of the school and indicated several factors which could have been responsible for the current situation.

The school had a history of administrators who believed in the worth of the individual. They believed the school must do everything possible to prepare young people for entry into society as useful citizens. This included preparation for a vocation. The administrators, therefore, stressed that Prairie City Composite was one school with a single purpose and there was no room for differences between the academic and vocational divisions. The result was a staff, dedicated in its purpose, which made the transition from stage-to-stage move along quite smoothly. The tradition passed on from generation-to-generation so that today's staff maintains the same dedication and enters periods of transition with a minimum of difficulty.

The academic, commercial and technical divisions had accepted the philosophy that all divisions were important and must rely on one another for individual success, and each was a vehicle for the success of the

school's clients. They were abetted by an administrative staff which was capable of recognizing and removing areas of possible inter-divisional conflict. This resulted in a staff proud of its achievements and constantly striving to better the educational opportunities available to the students.

The physical growth of the school has been mentioned several times as has the arrangement of the facilities. The placement of the academic teachers in close proximity to each other, and likewise the technical and commercial teachers, was rooted in the past. This resulted in the growth of fairly autonomous units within the school. The units not only shared many interests and values, but also respected each other for the contribution each was making to the development of the students. Thus, when circumstances dictated interaction among the groups, conflict was rarely encountered.

Summary of Chapter VI

This chapter reported the findings of the structured interviews carried out with the sample of administrative and teaching personnel of the Prairie City Composite High School. The procedures used to determine the extent to which each of the three variables was present were explained, as were the findings. The variables were then placed on the matrix and the results compared. The most significant observation was a perceptible lack of inter-divisional conflict. Because the results did not agree with the assumptions drawn earlier, a re-examination of the data, the interviewees, and the history and development of the school, was carried out. From this re-examination the pattern of reasons for "no conflict" was drawn and recorded.

Perceived status structure. The results of the inquiry indicated complete agreement that a status hierarchy existed. The majority of the teachers ranked the academic division as having the highest status, followed by the commercial and technical divisions respectively. Agreement was also reached that only two levels really existed as the commercial and technical divisions are both vocational. Therefore, the status ranking was academic and vocational.

Values. It would appear from the findings that each divisions' values were drawn from the overall values adopted by the school. The predominant value expressed frequently was the concern for the development of the individual by providing him with every available opportunity to succeed in some field of endeavour. The incidence of "many shared values" was high, while the incidence of "few shared values" was low.

Direction of initiation of action. The consensus of opinion was that there were few actions initiated which affected all three divisions. When actions of this sort were begun, it made no difference who the initiator was as long as the action would be beneficial to the students. This feeling was fostered by the size and complexity of the school. Few actions were ever explained at staff meetings. Consequently, no one really knew who had initiated the action.

Determination of "no conflict". Three categories of factors were utilized to describe the reasons why there was apparently no intra-organizational conflict, namely, (1) data findings, (2) direct observations, and (3) the history and development of the school.

Data findings were broken down into four categories which were:
(a) communications, (b) interests and goals, (c) shared perceptions and

and attitudes, and (d) others. Information regarding each of the four sub-headings was culled from the recorded answers of the interviewees. The findings indicated various perceptions for the situation that had been found.

Direct observations entailed asking for responses to queries dealing with the reasons for the lack of inter-divisional conflict. The responses were determined by each individual's concept of the term conflict, his point of view, his position in the teaching hierarchy, and his formal and informal relationships with the remaining staff members. Therefore, the findings in this section were based on the value judgements of the interviewee and interviewer.

The history and development of the school had been dealt with extensively in the previous chapter, therefore, only a few cursory remarks were added at this stage.

The significance of this chapter was that it indicated that in at least this instance, regarding inter-divisional conflict, a large complex educational institution did not fit the pattern of expectations set by industrial and commercial concerns.

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CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This concluding chapter presents a summary of the problem, methodology, and findings of the study. Conclusions which have been reached and implications for administrators and for further research constitute the final sections.

I. SUMMARY

The Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine whether inter-divisional conflict existed between or among departments within a large complex school.

Perceived status hierarchy, shared values, and the direction of initiation of action were used to determine whether conflict ensued under the following conditions:

1. When action was initiated from a perceived high status group to a perceived low status group (a) where there were many shared values, and (b) where there were few shared values.
2. When action was initiated from a perceived low status group to a perceived high status group (a) where there were many shared values, and (b) where there were few shared values.

If conflict was not apparent, the study was to determine why the conflict did not exist and the measures used to avoid conflict.

Methodology

Teachers and administrators at the Prairie City Composite High School were asked to indicate their willingness to participate in the

study. From those who answered in the affirmative, a random sample of thirty persons was chosen and they were interviewed individually.

The interviews were structured so the interviewer could digress when he believed another topic, other than the one under discussion, would be more beneficial. Varying techniques were used as determined by these circumstances, namely one (or a combination) of the following: (1) retaining all questions on the interview schedule, (2) using key questions to solicit spontaneous reactions, (3) completely informal questioning, and (4) informal conversation.

Information was also gathered from interviews with past teaching and administrative personnel from the Prairie City Composite High School.

Historical data was secured by perusing the yearbooks and school newspapers. These ranged from 1914 to 1967 and provided valuable information for the study.

Findings

Perceived Status Structure. A status structure was found that was recognized and apparently accepted by all the divisions in the school. The academic division was accorded the highest status followed by the commercial and technical divisions respectively. However, the majority of persons interviewed expressed the opinion that the status structure should consist of two levels only, academic and vocational, with the vocational encompassing all technical and commercial programmes.

Values. The findings indicated accord among the divisions regarding those values held by the entire school, each division, and each department within the divisions. Thus, there were many shared values and few which were in discord. A large percentage of the values

appeared throughout the study of the history and development of the school, thereby indicating that the value structure was built primarily on traditional values.

The most predominant value held was that the school must be concerned with the individuality of each student. There appeared to be consensus that the student must be provided with the opportunity to find and develop his potential according to his interests and desires. Other values emanating from this primary one were discussed and found in each of the three divisions.

Professionalism was rated highly as an important value by those interviewed. They believed that the entire staff was composed of professionals who acted in a professional manner and were treated as professionals by the administrative staff and their peers. This, they stated was one of the primary reasons why conflict was not prevalent and if it did arise, why it could not be sustained.

Direction of initiation of action. Two significant findings were reported. First, there was little action initiated at any time by one division which had implications for the other two divisions, because most matters concerning the whole school were disposed of through the administrators of the school. That is, the administration dictated what actions were to be taken, when, where, and how. This was due in large part to the size of the school.

The second finding was that divisions would be co-operative no matter which one initiated an action, provided that the action meant the students would receive the benefits of the activity.

No conflict. When the preceding variables and the results of the interviews were placed on the conflict matrix, agreement was reached in

one cell only. Thus, assumption one, that inter-divisional conflict would be found and would be related in part to the variables chosen, was discredited.

The apparent reasons for the state of no conflict between divisions were then discussed under four sub-headings, (1) data findings, (2) direct observations of the teachers, (3) the history and development of the school, and (4) others. Discussion under each sub-heading was limited to those reasons most frequently advanced by the teachers and those repeated most often in the school's yearbooks and newspapers.

Data findings indicated that communication among divisions was limited, therefore, interaction was also limited. The result was few personality clashes at this level and less likelihood of inter-divisional interference, procedural difficulties or advancement of cross purposes between divisions. The need for inter-divisional communication was decreased by the communication system that was in effect for handling matters at this level. The administrative staff relayed instructions and orders which affected the whole school whenever this type of communication was necessary. Consequently, high status groups could not feel they were being subjugated to commands from lower status groups.

Because there was a perceptible sharing of both interests and goals, there was little possibility for divisions to come into conflict with each other. The same was found true in regard to perceptions and attitudes. There were too many areas of agreement between the divisions to permit lasting feelings of animosity.

The direct observations from teachers centered about the question of leadership. The general consensus of opinion was that because the school had been administered by men endowed with a sense of purpose and

vision, inter-divisional conflict was not allowed to become a major part of the school. The administration introduced new vocational subjects in such a manner that they were accepted with a minimum of difficulty.

Other observations indicated that the staff looked upon itself as a single professional unit serving a single purpose. Therefore, competition for students, facilities, recognition, and resources was almost non-existent. Instead, co-operation in accomplishing the goals of education was stressed. This was strengthened by the feeling of professionalism shared by the staff, which did not allow them to come into conflict with each other because they were striving to give each student the best possible education according to his interests and capabilities.

The history and development of the school substantiated the reasons for no conflict as reported by the teachers. The strength, vision, and purpose of previous administrators led to the adopting of a philosophy of education which was still found at the present time. The administrators set the tone for the development of the school's interests, attitudes and values. Through their efforts, differences of opinion between divisions were forgotten and co-operative behavior developed.

II. CONCLUSIONS

At the outset of this report it was assumed that inter-divisional conflict was inevitable in a large complex school when a low status group initiated action for a higher status group, particularly when few values were shared. In reviewing the findings of this

study one is led to conclude that inter-divisional conflict is not inevitable in all large complex schools.

The conclusions reached cannot be projected beyond the Prairie City Composite High School.

Status incongruencies and the direction of initiation of action seemed to be disregarded when an activity beneficial to the students was introduced. This would indicate that teachers, unlike the industrial workers in other studies, place less importance on their position in the status hierarchy. They appear to be concerned with achieving the primary goals set by the school through co-operative endeavour. Their actions also indicated that the concept of a status hierarchy within the school under study was disappearing. This should result in increased interaction among the three divisions of the school. With increased interaction a better understanding of the functions of each division would occur and greater co-operation in student placement should result.

The organizational changes which occurred appear to have been responsible for averting conflict among groups. Relatively autonomous divisions have developed with their own authority hierarchy. Each has a first assistant principal aided by two second assistant principals to provide leadership and to make decisions. These men are trained in the field which they administer and are, consequently, interested in the functioning of their particular division. Because they are trained and interested, they are capable of foreseeing possible areas of conflict and taking steps to alleviate the conflict-producing circumstances, thereby averting or avoiding situations which might develop into inter-divisional conflict.

The complexity of the chain of command, combined with the manner of making decisions, submerges the identity of the initiator of actions. This loss of identity avoids the danger of conflict arising because one division feels that another is becoming too powerful or domineering.

Individuals who wish to retain their identity remain with their own departmental group. Each group in turn remains apart from the others for the same reason. Interaction, as previously noted, remains at a minimum between groups. The danger of inter-divisional conflict arising is negligible. If the school grows larger, the gulf among divisions will widen.

Further withdrawal of divisions from interacting could quite conceivably have the converse effect from the current situation, conflict. This would be caused by a break in communications among the various divisions of the school, with a resultant loss in the singleness of purpose that exists today. Future conflict is apparent if the school continues to expand.

The findings indicated that strong leadership and control exercised by the administrators from 1914 to the present have had a great deal to do with the absence of inter-divisional conflict. Control has been exercised through bureaucratic practices. Note for example the practice of the administrative staff arriving at decisions and relaying them downward through a one-way communication system. At the same time however, those responsible for the administration of the school are constantly working for the benefit of the staff rather than for themselves. An example being the choices allowed teachers regarding subjects and grade levels they wish

to teach. From these practices one can conclude that when bureaucratic policies are exercised in conjunction with practices concerned with benefiting the teachers, there will be co-operation rather than conflict.

Evidence produced by this study strongly suggests that inter-divisional conflict would be difficult to maintain in a complex school where staff members are treated as professionals by the administrators and are accepted as peers by each other. Because they are acknowledged as professionals and accepted as equals, each would strive to avoid conflict when possible, resolve it when necessary, or use it for the betterment of the school.

III. IMPLICATIONS

Implications for further research. This study investigated only one school using three variables to determine whether inter-divisional conflict existed. The school's history indicated a constant growth in the development of vocational subjects, which led to their acceptance by the teaching personnel. More extensive studies can be carried out using more than one school, different variables, and having different histories.

A comparative study, using a secondary school not having such clear divisions between programmes, that is, wings, would provide additional information regarding the causes of, or lack of, inter-divisional conflict. The same variables should be used to make the comparison more valid.

Those interviewees who did not welcome the one-way communication, indicated that there was an undercurrent of dissatisfaction with the communication network within the school. They suggested that conflict was imminent unless immediate steps were taken to improve the situation. An analysis of the formal and informal communication systems would indicate relationships and interactions which could lead to inter-divisional co-operation or conflict.

A study of intragroup conflict within an educational setting would be beneficial to administrators. Information pointing to causes for interpersonal conflicts within school groups has thus far remained a relatively virgin domain.

It would appear that research in either inter-divisional or intra-divisional relationships is warranted.

Implications for administrative practice. Smith (1966) stated:

. . . A basic premise of the problem is that intra-organizational conflict has its source in the nature of the organization as a social system, in the way it is structured and in the manner in which the component subsystems are interrelated (p. 505).

School administrators must make themselves aware of the organizational structure in their schools and relate events to it. That is, the structure may be causing incompatible subsystems to interact frequently, causing subsequent conflict among them. An analysis of the situation could lead to a restructuring of the organization to eliminate or reduce tensions, thereby averting some forms of conflict and reducing others. Another outcome of such an analysis may provide the administrator with an opportunity to turn dysfunctional conflict into functional conflict. He may use it to direct change, bring about stability (through

conflict resolution), or facilitate the adaptability of the organization.

If conflict is not evident within the school, an administrator may use an analysis of the organizational structure to determine why the conflict is not apparent or whether there is hidden conflict which may cause problems in the future. The knowledge he would gain regarding his school could be used to foresee conflict-producing situations and he could take appropriate steps to avoid or use the situations.

Theory indicates that an administrator should be aware of the values shared by the members of each group, as a result of their backgrounds and previous work experiences. These values could have an important influence on the members' approach to the job, on their ideas about status and on their developing relationships with each other. When the values are known, predictions about activities, interactions, and conflict situations, should be easier (Homans, 1950).

Possibly the greatest implication for administrators is the need to assess their role in terms of the changed educational institutions--composite schools, comprehensive schools, technical schools, and so on. The complex interrelationships which must occur among the highly specialized academic, commercial and technical divisions, demand a new, clearly defined role. Administrators must assume the responsibility for defining it, themselves.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

Department of Educational Administration
University of Alberta,
Edmonton, Alberta
March 14, 1968

Dear Sir or Madam:

Some time ago I requested, and was given permission to carry out a research project in Prairie City Composite High School. Since that time I have talked with your principal who has kindly given me permission to contact each of you through the medium of this letter.

The purpose of the study is to gather information regarding the establishment and development of Prairie City Composite High School, and to study the organization and administration of the school with particular emphasis upon the co-ordination of departments. This necessitates the study of the interactions between and among departments and the individuals within the departments.

Because this is intended to be a case study of one school, it was decided that the information could be gathered most successfully through structured and/or informal interviews. Each interview would require approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Anonymity of individuals is assured as all responses will be recorded and tabulated by myself. I would therefore solicit your assistance in this project. Please check one answer and return this letter to the office as soon as possible. Once your answer has been received you will be contacted and a time suitable to you will be arranged for the interview.

Yours sincerely,

R. J. Mitchell

I will participate (), do not wish to participate ()
in the study.

Signature: _____

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Are you teaching in your area of subject specialization? Yes or No.
2. If no - why?
 - i) asked to do so by the school administration
 - ii) your own request
 - iii) other
3. Have you ever taught outside of your own field? Yes or No.
4. If yes - was there any noticeable friction, differences of opinion, or conflict between your associates in the different areas? Example - between commercial and academic staff members?
5. If yes - what caused the conflict and how was it handled?
6. How would you rank the following educational divisions according to your perception as to their importance.
 - i) Vocational training
 - ii) Academic training
 - iii) Commercial training
7. What do you see as being the main task of the school?
8. What do you see as being the main task of your department?
9. In your opinion, is it essential that all students take academic subjects? Yes or No.
10. Why?
11. If you were counselling prospective teacher candidates, what area of specialization would you suggest to them? Academic, vocational or technical?
12. Why that particular discipline rather than either of the other two areas omitted?
13. How often are departmental meetings held?
14. What purpose do they serve?
15. Does your department ever meet with other departments, other than at staff meetings? If so, with whom?
16. For what purpose?
17. Do other departments/department members make suggestions to your department regarding such matters as (i) subject content; (ii) possible improvements; (iii) teaching techniques? (iv) discipline of students etc.?

18. If yes - has conflict resulted?
19. If yes - what was the result?
- i) resolved by staff members from other departments?
 - ii) resolved by department members?
 - iii) resolved by the administration?
 - iv) resolved by other - if so - what and how?
20. Who sets the standards for your department?
- i) department head
 - ii) department members
 - iii) administrators
 - iv) school staff as a whole
21. Do you agree with the method of setting the standards? Yes or No.
22. If no - who should set the standards?
23. Do your colleagues agree with you? Yes or No.
24. Is there much interaction between departments within the school?
Yes or No.
25. Does there appear to be a status hierarchy in teaching? i.e., Do you feel that other staff members, students, parents and the general public rate one field of education as being more important than another? Yes or No.
26. If yes - what is the hierarchy from highest to lowest? Commercial, vocational, academic.
27. Who, in your opinion, is the most influential staff member? (Other than an administrative staff member.)
28. Who makes the major decisions within the school?
- i) the administration?
 - ii) department heads?
 - iii) teachers at the staff meetings?
29. When problems arise at staff meetings, who generally seizes the initiative and suggests possible solutions?
- i) members of the academic staff
 - ii) members of the commercial staff
 - iii) members of the vocational staff
 - iv) others

30. If another department/field of education were to initiate an action involving all staff members and requiring extra time and effort, do you feel that the other departments would
- i) co-operate wholeheartedly
 - ii) object outright
 - iii) come into conflict with the initiators
31. Do you believe that all teachers should be degreed personnel? Yes or No.
32. Should all teachers be required to graduate with an academic oriented degree first and then specialize in a commercial or vocational field? Yes or No.
33. If a vocational teacher has received a journeyman's certificate, should he be given credit for four years of training when placed on the salary schedule? Yes or No.
34. Why?
35. Should vocational, commercial and academically trained teachers teach in each other's field or even be asked to do so? Yes or No.
36. Does this occur? Yes or No.
37. If so, what results? Are there feelings of animosity, conflict, co-operation, esprit de corps, etc.?
38. If conflict is apparent - who recognizes it and how is it resolved?
39. When groups or committees are established to deal with a school-wide problem, how is the membership determined?
- i) by the administration - see question 41
 - ii) nomination by staff members
 - iii) voluntary participation
 - iv) other
40. What group(s) are most commonly represented?
41. Does the administration strive to have representation from all groups (Commercial, Academic, Vocational) on committees? Yes or No.
42. Is there a minority group of teachers who oppose the majority? Yes or No.
43. Do they belong to the same group (Commercial, Academic, Vocational)? Yes or No. Which one?
44. Are group pressures brought to bear on individuals or groups in order to resolve conflict, either inter or intra, individual or group? Yes or No.

45. Do a group of teachers stay by themselves? Yes or No.
46. Which group(s)?
47. When teachers socialize together, do they do so in select groups according to department? Yes or No.
48. Are committees used to overcome group conflict? Yes or No.
49. Is there one group in particular that shows leadership which is accepted by the other groups? Yes or No.
50. Which group? Commercial, Academic, Vocational.
51. How are extra-curricular tasks allocated?
 - i) by the administration
 - ii) volunteers from the staff
 - iii) other - specify
52. Who supervises dances, drama and music nights, athletic events, halls, washrooms and cafeteria?
53. How are these tasks allocated?
54. Does conflict arise? Yes or No.
55. If yes - what type, by whom, and how resolved?
56. Does the administration assist the staff members in settling minor differences? Yes or No.
57. Does the staff participate in social activities which are planned for complete staff participation? Yes or No.
58. Who does the planning of these activities?
59. Do you feel that the other divisions of the school are given the "cream of the crop" in regard to student placement and budgeting? Yes or No.
60. Is there ever open criticism of one department by another? Yes or No.
61. What is the result?
62. How is the situation handled and/or resolved?
63. Do you perceive areas where strong differences of opinion arise between groups rather than individuals? Yes or No.

64. If yes - (i) between whom?
(ii) how are the differences resolved?
65. Who prepares the timetable?
66. Should each department participate in the preparation of the timetable?
67. Do you feel that some subject areas are allocated time blocks disproportionate in relation to their importance? Yes or No.
68. If yes, which subjects (classify as to Academic, Vocational, and Commercial).

The term vocational was used as a synonym for technical for the benefit of those individuals who referred to the three divisions of the school as academic, business subjects, and vocational. Care was taken to arrive at a mutual understanding of the terminology with the interviewee.

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